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FILE ONLY

President's News Conference on Foreign and Domestic Issues

Following is a transcript of President Reagan's news conference last night in Washington, as recorded by The New York Times:

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Carter Debate Papers

Q. Mr. President, nearly a year ago you said that you wanted to get to the bottom of the matter of the so-called briefing papers that went from the Carter White House into your 1980 campaign. I wonder, sir, if in that year you have ever talked to Mr. Baker and to Mr. Casey and asked them precisely what their roles were in that matter?

A. Yes, and I think they're easily understandable. One has no recollection — and I can understand that from a campaign — of something that might've come through his office and been passed on. That goes on.

I think there is one thing that ought to be cleared up about this whole case. And I did give orders to the F.B.I. to make this investigation thorough, and I gave orders to all of our people to cooperate to the fullest extent, and they did.

And the Justice Department and the F.B.I. were satisfied that it was no criminal intent of any kind. But the thing that I want to make clear is we still keep calling it the 'briefing book.'

Now, it was established quite a while ago that the so-called debate briefing book, of the Carter team, never has been in our possession; that all that was uncovered were some position papers, the type of things that were issues during the cam-

paign, and all of it had been out in the open and made public as the campaign went on, before the debate.

But the briefing book, if you will remember, the briefing book, it was pointed out, finally someone located on the other side, and there it was, and no one on this side ever saw it, nor was it ever in our hands.

Q. To finally call it off, sir, there seems, however, to be some conflict in the matter, because although the Justice Department said no crime has been committed, a Democratic-controlled committee on the Hill says — suggests — that there may have been a crime committed. In view of the fact that there is this conflict — the Democrats don't believe your Justice Department, and the Republicans don't believe the Democratic Committee — wouldn't it be better to have a special prosecutor that would resolve the matter once and for all?

A. Well, that matter is in the court now. And if that is decided by the court, I will give the same orders with regard to cooperation. Frankly, based on that Democratic Committee report, it didn't make any sense at all. This has been investigated thoroughly.

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